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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted of part-time instructors--called "animators"--who teach literacy in villages in Tamil Nadu, India. Three literacy programs were studied: a state-run program, a voluntary program, and a university-run program, all in rural areas. Structured interviews were conducted over several weeks with 52 animators to see how they saw themselves, their work, and the agency for which they worked. Questions were directed to the selection processes and training of animators, the development of inservice support systems, and the continuing use of some animators, planners, and trainers. The study found that most of the animators were in the work to help others or to help themselves for social reasons, although a few expected material rewards. Most said they liked their jobs and wished to continue, even if they were not paid. The animators were more aware of the material rather than the human resources available for their work. Less than a third of the animators said that they possessed any special characteristics for their work. They often lacked confidence and felt they lacked direction from their supervisors. Nevertheless, some of the animators prepared their own materials and took initiative in preparing their classes. All the animators knew their students well and were aware of their problems, although they did not see how they themselves could help the students with the problems. All the animators had had training and many felt that it was adequate. Implications of the study were drawn in the areas of selection, training, and use of animators. (KC)

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PARTNERS IN LITERACY

a pilot attitudinal survey of literacy animators in Tamil Nadu, India

edited by Alan Rogers

surveyed by Fr M. Elias,
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PARTNERS IN LITERACY:

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BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

This report is the result of some six months work in Tamil Nadu undertaken by students of the University of Madras Department of Adult and Continuing Education and some of the staff of the State Resource Centre in association with Professor Alan Rogers, Rotary International Visiting Professor in the University of Madras 1987-88.

The subject of the project was the literacy programme in which the Department and the State Resource Centre were heavily engaged. Discussion suggested that the focal point should be the animators' - part-time instructors, chosen from the villages in which they teach, given training and support, materials and supervision, and made responsible for the building up and teaching of a group of some thirty adult learners over a ten-twelve month period; they are paid a small sum for this work.

Originally it was hoped to pursue a participatory evaluation project with both learners and animators, but discussion with project directors and supervisors suggested that these higher level functionaries did not feel that the animators possessed the skills and insights necessary to undertake such a project. What seemed clear was that we knew less about the animators than we thought we knew. Some of them left before the end of the course, and many of the others were felt not to be innovative. Enquiries as to the reasons for these 'failures', in the hopes that policies might be devised to reduce the numbers of drop-outs and uninnovative animators, failed to identify any general reasons.

But what also emerged was the fact that there were strong negative attitudes among the agencies towards some of the animators. These have been noted in other sources. The Directorate of Adult Education (New Delhi), in its valuable Handbook Training of Adult Education Functionaries published under the National Adult Education Programme (NAEP), reported that

> *many previous attempts at organising adult literacy and adult education campaigns, including Farmers' Functional Literacy, did not succeed primarily due to lack of appropriate training programmes for instructors, supervisors and other functionaries.*

In Tamil Nadu, various evaluatory reports were published under the aegis of the Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS), and in the summary of these reports it was stated that

> *the adult education instructors (also referred to as animators) and other higher level functionaries had not been able to create or sustain enthusiasm among the illiterate adults, since the functionaries themselves were not well equipped either by aptitude or by training to play the role of change-agents [1]*

'Animator' is the word used in many parts of India for village level workers in literacy and development programmes. Elsewhere they go under different titles such as instructors, facilitators, change agents etc. The word 'functionaries' covers all the workers in the programme, village level animator, supervisor and project officer.

A sample survey of animator-trainees undertaken by MIDS suggested that more than 80% of these future animators were characterised by negative attitudes towards the rural poor and that the training offered to these animators by the project officers did not change these attitudes and may even have strengthened some of them:

> *The lack of confidence and ideological commitment among literacy teachers undercut the grand intentions for structural transformation of the NAEP: some tutors actually became more conservative through the experience, adopting the view that poverty and illiteracy were the fault of the poor and the illiterate who failed through sloth and lack of motivation [2]*

Several programmes experienced a high drop-out rate of animators before the completion of the programme; and few functionaries chose to continue the programme for a second phase. On other occasions, too few learners attended the classes (which was taken to mean that the animators were failing in their task of encouraging learners to come), so that village literacy centres had to be closed.

When it is remembered that the aim of the NAEP was no less than that "the illiterate and the poor can rise to their own liberation through literacy, dialogue and action", it is clear that we are asking a great deal of our animators. As the Handbook recognised, "an adult educator is called upon to ...initiate and sustain adult education activities through the active participation of the learners". [3]

On the other hand, the project officers and supervisors we spoke to were able to identify several animators as being satisfactory and some as more than satisfactory; and personal contact with a number of animators suggested that they were not unmotivated or lacking in insights or ability. It therefore seemed worthwhile to enquire whether these 'good" animators were seen to possess experience and insights which made them valuable partners in the adult education and development enterprise, either by using them again as an animator or by using their experience in planning the next project or in helping with the training and support of new animators.

This led to a further point. Where an animator may be identified as 'good' (i.e. effective), it can be argued that the programme has contributed more or less permanently to the human resources of the village. The question therefore arose as to whether this in fact happened: what did the animators do in their own village after the programme had been completed? Did they continue to work in some way or other in their village? This would be a measure of their motivation and commitment and the level of ability and confidence they had built up during their literacy work.

We accepted the definition of 'good' (i.e. effective) and 'unsatisfactory' animators from the agencies themselves. Our aim was to help the agencies in their policy decisions and practice, and this had to be done within the terms set by the agencies. We were not engaged in an evaluation of these programmes but in a survey of their animators to see if they could be assisted to become more effective.

The project then defined itself - an attempt to see the animators in relation to their task and the future which lay beyond their task. It would have been possible to organise an outsider objective piece of research; but we were more interested in working with the animators to see if they themselves felt that they possessed experience and insights which might enable them to undertake the task and even persuade the project officers and supervisors to use them in the planning and training process.

We chose three literacy programmes, a state-run programme (S), a voluntary-body-run programme (V) and a university-run programme (U). We chose to concentrate on rural animators, on the grounds that teaching literacy in an urban environment with signs of literacy all around reinforcing the message, thus creating a supportive learning environment, is very different from teaching literacy in a rural environment where the relative lack of written materials in signs, publications or other forms creates an adverse learning environment; the skills and attitudes of the literacy animators in these two contexts are so different that their training needs are also different. (We broke this rule in that the YWCA in Madras asked us if we could use the same research tool with the animators in their city-based literacy programme; the results of this survey are printed as an appendix. The differences are marked). And finally we chose a project which had completed a literacy programme in 1983 in order to see what had happened to the instructors over the intervening five years.

The process was a relatively simple one - to explore with the animators how they saw themselves, their work and the agency they worked for. We would also try to explore their expressed attitudes and opinions and also their activities as indicating their attitudes and opinions. The methodology employed was a structured interview conducted in each case by someone already well known to the animators and in their own tongue; the results of this would be discussed with the animators as a group and finally with a mixed group of animators and agencies. We possessed no resources at all for this survey (though the State Resource Centre helped considerably in several ways), so that it was not possible to bring together the animators in any extended residential meeting.

The interview schedule was constructed over several weeks by pilot interviews and discussion and gradually the outline of the research emerged. We wished to help each agency to examine the selection processes which had apparently on occasion led to the choice of 'unsatisfactory' animators (in their own terms) so as to avoid such choices in future. We wished to discover whether the animators felt that they possessed the confidence and skills to do the work required of them. We wished to find out whether the animators continued with these same attitudes and confidence after they had completed their term of duty.

It was clear from the start that in the time available we could only pilot the project; the results presented here are not intended to be a final report but merely an indication that this approach can yield much fruit.

The field work was conducted by Fr Elias (Department of Adult Education) and M J Ranjanidoss (State Resource Centre), with help from several other workers; the YWCA survey was conducted by Ms R Padmini. Those meetings which were held were attended by as many members of the team as possible, but in the end the research programme over-ran the allotted time and some of the meetings were not held.

The survey is not intended to be a matter of academic enquiry alone; it is intended to lead to policy decisions and changed practices - in particular relating to

* the selection processes and training of animators,
* the development of inservice support systems,
* the continuing use of some animators as animators, planners and trainers.

Others may find other uses for the material in this report. Our objective is not to blame the animators, but to suggest changes in our own work so that they can be free to engage in the task so many of them want to do effectively.

For the task of teaching literacy is a difficult one. This has been recognised time and again, not least by the Directorate of Adult Education in its Handbook. The demands on the village-level worker are very great: it is not a simple thing to encourage learners to come to classes day after day, and to help them to realise the relevance and indeed the importance of the task they are engaged in and to overcome the natural disappointments and hesitations which come in any prolonged course of study, to build up in the learners a sense of achievement and success.

And it is important to remind ourselves that the main aim of this report is not to categorise the animators but to test the methodology; we do not suggest that all literacy animators - even all literacy animators in Tamil Nadu - are like these people. We are suggesting that it is important for us to find out just what they are like - and how we can best help them to do their work better.

Notes:

1. K Ramakrishnan, The Indian Adult Education Programme in Tamil Nadu, in C Duke (ed), Combatting Poverty through Adult Education (1985) pages 72-100.

2. Unpublished evaluation reports of Adult Education Programme in Tamil Nadu, produced by Madras Institute for Development Studies: Appraisal of role of state government (Dec 1982); Longitudinal study of the programme and its outcome (Sep 1984); Linkages with development programmes (Nov 1984); Problems of special target groups (Mar 1985); Effects of concentration of adult education centres (Mar 1985).

3. Training of Adult Education Functionaries, a Handbook, published by the Directorate for Adult Education, New Delhi 1985.

CHAPTER 1: VIEW FROM THE TOP

Before looking at the animators, it is necessary first to survey the attitudes of the agencies, the state-run programme (S), the university-run programme (U), and the voluntary-run programme (V). In particular we need to see by what criteria and for what role the supervisors were appointed, the centres chosen, the animators selected and how they were supported in their work, and what were the reasons for failures (if any) in the programme. What follows is based on interviews with the agencies.

The State-run programme:

The State Project Officer at Madurantakkam, Chengleput District, 92 kms from Madras, is responsible for 100 adult literacy centres run in the evenings (6-9 p.m.); each centre consisted of thirty learners. There are three full-time supervisors who live in neighbouring towns but they were not available for us to meet. The centres have "the usual mixture of awareness, family planning, agricultural new methods, animal husbandry, social welfare (health and drinking water) as well as literacy" during the ten months programme. Most of the centres are for women (all the classes in our sample were for women). No post-literacy or follow-up programmes are offered.

The University-run programme:

A total of 28 classes were started by the University of Madras in 16 villages, all within 10 kms of Poonamallee, a market town some 35 kms from the city. Classes are run in the evening. One Project Officer (a lecturer in the Department of Adult and Continuing Education) and one full-time supervisor were appointed. All the centres were for the weaker sections, four for men and 24 for women. This was the last year of the programme: the University was changing its approach to "an area approach to the eradication of literacy".

The Voluntary-body-run programme:

The Doraisamy Generous Social Education Society has been working in a series of villages around its headquarters in Villavarayanallur 105 kms from Madras for many years. It has been engaged in the NAEP and its successor for the last three years, with 30 centres each year and (in the first year only) some post-literacy classes. Since the State Adult Education Programme was implemented in and around Madurantakkam, the Society was asked to move its literacy programme from around its headquarters to Uthirameru, some 60 kms from Villavarayanallur, using local animators and supervisors stationed in that area. 30-40 learners formed a centre; most of them were aged between 16 and 35 but a few older. The majority of the centres were for women.

Selection of supervisors:

State: Whereas many of the Project Officers in the state-run programme were administrators or teachers released and transferred to the NAEP, the full-time supervisors were normally required to be recruited from unemployed graduate teachers; 90% of the supervisors in the state-run programme in Tamil Nadu possess a B.Ed. This is often their first job and they are employed temporarily for a period of ten months without knowing if they will be re-employed or

continued in office (though in fact most are continued into the next phase of the programme unless they get themselves a permanent job). They are appointed by the District Adult Education Officer after interview and are assigned by him to a Project Officer (who is not consulted or involved in the interview) on the basis of three supervisors to every 100 centres. The supervisors are responsible for the training of the animators. Some of them were trained alongside the animators; very few special training programmes were held for supervisors. The three supervisors in Madurantakkam were typical of these requirements. All three were men although most of the classes were for women.

University: The University Department selects supervisors from among its unemployed M.A. (Andragogy) graduates on the grounds that "this course with its practical field-work provided adequate experience and training for supervisors"; no further training is provided. The supervisor is selected "for his ability to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate the programmes". He is appointed on a one-year contract and encouraged to find a permanent post after the end of this term of employment; the post is not seen as a career step. "The rate of pay [Rs600 per month plus travel], lack of career orientation and incentive, do not attract many applicants".

The supervisor is supported by an elaborate monitoring team comprising the staff and students of the Department which (in theory) meets every Monday (sometimes in the Department, sometimes in one of the centres and once a month with all the animators) as a Village Monitoring Committee. This Committee reviewed each centre in terms of attendance and performance "on the development literacy pattern: a survey of needs placed in a hierarchy which feed into the development cycle leading to educational needs. These needs are checked at each monthly meeting. Participation and attitudinal changes are also assessed". The system was however not operational in the second half of 1987.

One supervisor (male) was appointed in January 1987; he left after five months and in August another supervisor (male) was appointed who remained with the programme to the end of the year. He surveyed the work being done, closed a number of centres where attendance of animator or learners appeared to be unsatisfactory, found some new animators where the first appointments had left, and supervised the rest of the animators in the programme.

Voluntary: The voluntary agency advertised in the local newspaper; many applications were received. The selection was done by a panel of people from the agency: many of the candidates in the end were unwilling to serve, but the successful candidate (male) was a qualified but unemployed teacher and social worker who came from a Scheduled Caste background from the area in which literacy classes were being held. The agency verified that he would be acceptable to the local population and then appointed him as supervisor. He participated in the six-day residential pre-service training course for animators.

Selection of centres:

State: The programme was based on the need to cover the whole block [sub-District] systematically. One third "had been covered last year", a second third in the current year, and the final third would be covered in the succeeding year. Centres were chosen according to the population statistics and the numbers of weaker section persons. All the centres were for women.

The centres were up to 25 kms from the office in Madurantakkam. Twenty seven villages had more than one literacy centre (class); some had as many as five classes. In some of these villages, adult education classes run by a voluntary body had already been commenced but these ceased when the state-run programme commenced. But normally (as with other State-run programmes), the agency "chose not to continue the programme in a given village for a second phase on account of insufficient response" [3].

University: The centres were chosen by the supervisor on the basis of accessibility to the university and the possibility of obtaining learners as reported by the local opinion leader(s). Nine villages had one centre, the other seven had two classes each. The centres were clustered in groups some 35 kms from the University.

Voluntary: Centres were placed in those villages in which the Society was working in its other development programmes. Some were as far as 60 kms away from the Society's headquarters. Some of the previous year's centres had been closed when the state-run programme entered the villages. Each village had two classes.

Selection of animators:

State: The animators were chosen after a village survey conducted by the supervisors from recommendations made by the panchayat president, village headman or *munsif*. Forms were issued ("free of cost"), and out of nearly 200 forms issued, some 150 were returned. Interviews were held in the villages or in the Education Office at Madurantakkam. Selection was based on educational level: all were SSLC or at least 8th Standard. "Social mind" was important but less important than educational attainment.

A 'good' animator was regarded as one who "runs the class according to the timetable, can give craft skills (for example, making soap powder), gives special classes. Some are innovative".

One animator was selected for each centre; none took more than one class. In every case they came from the same village as the centre. All were first time animators. The unsuccessful applicants were held in reserve; substitutes were appointed if any animator leaves.

University: The supervisor chose the animators on the basis of local opinion. Animators were chosen not for their SSLC or other educational level (some had only 5th Standard) but on "their ability to meet the role of awareness, functionality and literacy; their personal abilities, mobilisation and articulation, as judged by an informal interview". "There is no rush for the job" since the rate of pay [Rs100 per month without travel costs] is regarded as low; some had to be persuaded to take the task. One animator was chosen for each class, all from the same village as the centre. Nearly one third [8/22] had served as literacy animator at least once before; the rest were first-time animators. All taught one class only.

In some cases, substitute animators were appointed when the original animator dropped out but in other cases this was not possible and the centre was closed. In one case, the substitute animator approached the supervisor and asked for the job, but in all the other cases the same search process was undertaken by the supervisor.

Voluntary: Notices were placed in the chosen villages asking for volunteers. In several cases there was more than one applicant and a selection committee composed of the Society and village leaders made the final choice on the basis of an interview. More than 100 persons were interviewed for 30 centres. Selection was on the basis of "social mind" more than educational qualifications. Some craft skills and facility with songs and dances were also regarded as necessary. Educational level (SSLC or failed Standard 10) was reduced in the case of female animators (Standard 9). Animators always came from the same village, never from outside; no chosen village failed to produce at least one suitable candidate. Most of them were first-time animators; experience by itself was not a major criteria. And no animator taught more than one class.

Some reserve animators were also selected; the chosen animator "knows the unsuccessful candidates, and sometimes they help as well, though unpaid".

Training and support systems:

The NAEP allocated 11% of the budget to each programme for the pre-service and in-service training of functionaries; it suggested that 21 days of training should be provided for the animators, half of it pre-service, half of it in-service. Again there was a requirement that 25 days of every month should be spent by the supervisor in visiting the centres so that each class would be covered at least once in each month. The regulations of the UGC under which the university-run programme operated were different.

State: The training of animators was provided by the field functionaries; only the chosen animators were trained, not the stand-by animators. It consisted of one block of ten days of pre-service training at Madurantakkam, and involved the supervisors and Project Officer. Those animators who were being used a second time attended the full ten-day pre-service training programme again but were used as group leaders or other assistants.

Each orientation course varied; the SRC helped to plan them. The animators were asked for feedback on the training and the response rate was about 50%. Some of the animators were used in the planning of the in-service training programmes, which consisted of three two-day courses dealing with special subjects like health and hygiene, animal husbandry etc.

University: A two-day pre-service training and orientation course was planned for the animators but this was reduced to one day owing to other commitments on the part of the University Department. This took place one month after the programme had begun. During this one-day course, "the objectives of NAEP were explained, techniques of teaching were imparted and confidence building and behavioural modification given". Two in-service courses of two days each were planned but not executed in the current year: one day of in-service training was provided to the animators, a family planning day attended by the local M.P.

The first supervisor did not visit the centres regularly; the replacement supervisor visited those centres which remained open from August 1987. Supervisor and animators met on average once every month; this meeting provided "an opportunity for a review of performance and individual success or failure stories" which were corroborated by the records of the classes and by the supervisor. According to the University Project Officer, "the weak link is the supervisor". The necessary support system for the animators is "a

committed supervisor, but this will not be possible until the post becomes a career post".

Voluntary: The Doraisamy Generous Social Education Society called upon the State Resource Centre for pre-service training of its animators. A six-day residential course was held at the Society's headquarters dealing with teaching techniques and materials and with confidence building; this was apparently highly appreciated by the animators. A four-day in-service residential meeting was held at the same place after four months; it consisted mainly of specialist input sessions. Regular (monthly) meetings of animators were also held; during these meetings progress was evaluated. About 25% of the time was spent on administrative matters, 75% on matters relating to literacy teaching.

The Project Officer (the Society's Director) and the supervisor met once every week to review progress. But the distance of some of the centres from the headquarters was felt to be a hindrance to regular support systems. The supervisor thus functioned independently in the area of operation. He had good rapport with the community as one of themselves, and with the local Block Development Officer and other officials in the Development Department. He conducted one-day in-service training programmes with the animators in which the agency's representatives participated.

Closures:

The State Resource Centre in Tamil Nadu suggests that a drop-out rate of some 40% of literacy animators is normal for each year. The reasons given are lack of commitment on the part of the animators and inadequate training.

State: out of 100 centres opened at the start of the programme, all of them completed the course. Those animators who left during the programme did so for the following reasons: two to get married, one for pregnancy. All three were replaced by others from the same village.

University: out of 28 classes, 15 lasted to the end. One was closed in the first two months, seven in six months, three more within nine months of the ten-month programme.

The reasons given were as follows: three of the original animators were replaced by other animators as they were judged to be unsatisfactory. Four left to get married, two left to have children. Seven more were stopped at the mid-term review because the attendance of the animator and/or the learners was deemed to be unsatisfactory, and a further three were stopped after nine months for the same reason.

Substitutes were appointed by the supervisor in many cases. The criteria used were that the animator should be "a young person (if a girl, unmarried) with no family ties, from within the same village, not an outsider, if possible with SSLC, having some local influence and sociability". The selection was made (if possible: in some villages it was not possible to find a suitable candidate) after consulting the (male) local panchayat leaders. The other animators where they existed were invited to offer suggestions but the learners were not consulted. The new animator was given no pre-service training and only the same in-service training and support as the other animators - i.e. they fitted into the vacant slot without preparation. The supervisor was instructed to tell the new animators what was needed but the Project Officer was "not sure how much time was spent on this".

The university indicated that it "sets high ideals on paper but that the implementation is weak because of operational reasons (mainly financial hold-ups) and the weakness of the supervisor". The criteria of success set by the university "is not attendance but continuation to the end even if there are only 2 or 3 learners"; but most of the centres were closed for unsatisfactory attendance patterns. The university used its students to conduct a pre-test but there was no systematic post-test of achievements or attitudinal changes; "informal spot-checking is done from time to time".

Voluntary: Out of 30 centres opened at the beginning of this year's programme, all 30 completed the course.

Additional note: reasons for closure

The following was supplied to us by the University programme:

..the insincerity and disinterest of the animator; she was not the right person to have been appointed; she should have recruited the learners .. it is the job of the animator to persuade them to come; .. her irregular attendance and drop-out rate show the failure of the animator..

.. the animator is now busy with a new job, self-employed, so she doesn't care any longer because she can earn more ...

.. the animator, a BSc graduate, was well off and therefore not very interested, only worked for one month. If he had only had a Certificate, he would have been sincere.

.. she got pregnant ..

.. her husband opened a bunk [petty store] in a neighbouring village and when he was away buying supplies, she had to work in the shop ..

.. her husband opposed her work; he was a drunkard. It was a sudden change of mind ..

.. she lived with her parents away from her husband, and ran the centre from her parents' home; after some months, she returned to her husband and the centre is closed.

.. she got married and moved away after 6-7 months; no-one knew of the marriage, it was a love marriage; she eloped.

CHAPTER 2: THE ANIMATORS: AS THEY SEE THEMSELVES

The following survey is based upon a sample of animators drawn from the three literacy programmes as follows: fifteen out of the thirty employed by the voluntary agency (V), fifteen out of the 100 employed by a state programme (S), and 22 out of 28 animators employed by the university programme (U). All the state animators were women; 8 of the 15 voluntary body animators were women, the other seven were men; and 19 of the university animators were women, three were men.

SELECTION OF ANIMATORS

Criteria of selection:

The criteria for selection of literacy animators have been discussed on many occasions but there still seems to be no general agreement. Some agencies concentrate on background, stressing that the animators should come from the same sort of social environment as the learners. Others stress the educational attainment level and the possession of useful skills which can be passed on to the learners. Some assert that the animators need to have good standing in their local community. Others again look for "a social mind", a sense of concern, an openness to the needs of the learners, sensitivity and innovativeness.

All those who choose animators seem to assume that these skills and attitudes already exist ready made. They rely on their training to reinforce the existing attitudes and to provide new knowledge and skills rather than to develop the confidence and motivation of the animators.

Identity with the learners:

All the animators in U and S came from the same village (in one case from a colony of the same village) in which the centre was held; but in the case of V at least two came from neighbouring villages and four from colonies attached to the centre village. In all cases, the centre was within walkable distance for the animator.

Since all three programmes were directed at Scheduled Castes or Backward Classes, it is not surprising that virtually all the animators were of the same caste as the learners; two of the V classes were made up of mixed castes. All the three agencies used significant numbers of Christians as animators who were teaching all Hindu or mixed groups of learners. All the animators taught classes made up of learners of the same gender except one man (V) who taught a mixed group.

There were, however, differences in the age levels. 7 (out of 22) of the U (32%), 9 (out of 15) of S and only 4 (out of 15) of the V were under 20. It would appear that the majority of the animators in the S programme felt themselves to be markedly younger than their learners; those in both the V and the U programmes were markedly older.

Social status:

Perhaps this is related to the fact that whereas two thirds of the S and U centres were held in the animators' own house, this was rare with the V programme. There was a policy of encouraging this with both of these former agencies, even when on occasion it was inconvenient to the learners ("it is at the entrance of the village [a new settlement] near the main road, the learners are settled a little in the interior"). The V programme did not apparently encourage this.

Even when they used their own house for the literacy class, many of the animators came from the same sort of home as those of their learners. Nevertheless, it is true that so far as we were able to see, most of the animators came from the upper strata of the village or colony community. Most of their houses had electricity and several had television, especially in the U programme.

Connections: Only two of the S animators seem to have come from families in a position of some influence (one obtained the post of animator "through a bribe" paid to the local MLA), but many more of those in the V (11/15) and U (10/22) programmes were well connected ("the local AIADMK [political party] President introduced me to the Project Officer and submitted my application"). Many of the animators themselves or immediate members of their family were involved in political parties, trade unions and other bodies such as the village Congress Party Committee, the Ambedkar Mandram, the Shivaji Mandram, the panchayat, the village Mathar Sangam, the Kamatchi Amman (Ladies) Mandram, the local mahalir mandram, Agricultural or Milk Co-operative Societies, the Co-operative Weaving Sangam or the village Parents Teachers Association.

This means that a significant number of the animators had already served or were serving as voluntary or social worker in their village: eleven out of the total fifty two were noonday meal scheme organisers, others served as "a volunteer conducting classes for the children in the village for many years", "giving free tuition for children in my village", "obtaining books for some of the schoolchildren" or coaching adults on a personal level, getting pensions for some of the older persons in the village etc. It is not surprising that this role continued while they served as literacy animator: "the learners", said one of the animators, approach me for guidance regarding pensions", and others said similar things.

It is therefore surprising that all the S and V animators were being employed as literacy instructor for the first time. On the other hand, one third (8/22) of the U animators had acted as a literacy instructor earlier: two of them had engaged in this task three times and two four times. One had been a nutrition instructor and another a tailoring instructor in her own village. There was thus a great deal of experience among the U animators. Nevertheless, even among this group, two thirds (14/22) were doing this work for the first time.

Family: Two thirds of both the S and the V animators, but less than a half of the U animators, were unmarried; this probably reflects the age difference, for the U animators were on the whole older than the other two groups. Most of the married animators had very young children at home, and several were or became pregnant during the time of the class. On the other hand, several of the unmarried girls who were appointed as animators gave up the task during the year to get married and move to their husband's new home. Where

animators got married but stayed on in their native village, they usually continued with the task of being animator.

Family circumstances affected a good number of these animators. One or two lived with their parents after their marriage but at some time during the year they went to live with their husband, giving up the task of animator. Two left their husbands to return to their parents' home. Sometimes the husband supported - even directed - a woman animator in the task; more often they hindered the work, sometimes stopping it altogether ("my husband did not like me doing this job; I could not ask the reason").

Occupations: Seven of the V animators and eight of the S animators (50% in each case) were unemployed (omitting the married women at home), 15 (out of 22) of the U animators were unemployed. A few (mostly men but including at least one woman) were engaged in their own jobs, and one or two left the work of literacy animator to develop their own business. There seems to have been a greater sense of security among the animators than among the learners: "I have no plans to get a job; my future is secure because of a regular income" (a woman); "my main preoccupation is employment: I am not much worried about the village as I am rather well off among the others with a good house with electricity and a television set" (a man).

What is perhaps more significant is that in both U and V (but not S) programmes, a significant number of animators came from families with a different occupation from that of the learners; two thirds of the U animators came from non-agricultural backgrounds. Those from an agricultural background were of course coolies (day-labourers). In all three programmes, one or two animators came from landed families (one from the landlord's family).

Educational level:

Standard	8-	8	9-	9	10-	10	SSLC-SSLC +2-			+2
S	2		1	2	1	9				
U	1	3	4				11	3		
V					1		7	3	1	3

It seems clear that V was able to use academic achievement and social position in the selection of animators; six of the V animators came from wealthy and/or influential families in the village and the academic level of the V animators was markedly higher than those of S and U: Thirteen of the U animators and 6 of the V animators had received some post-school non-certificated training and one had completed a post-school certificated course; only one of the S animators had taken any form of post-school training: subjects ranged from tailoring (with an instructor's certificate) and other crafts (knitting, embroidery, wire bag making, weaving) to typing, from first aid and home nursing to telephone operator and postal despatch. Nine of the V animators had acquired useful skills, against one of the S animators and two of the U animators. And more than two thirds of the V animators felt that they had useful skills to pass on to the learners; relatively fewer of the other animators felt like this. It would thus seem that V had been able to recruit animators of a higher educational level than any of the other agencies: no-one with less than 10th Std (failed) was employed by this agency. And this was reflected in their more positive attitudes and greater confidence.

What was surprising was the significant number of animators who did not read any books or magazines regularly or who, if they did, "did not use them in the centre" - surprising especially since some of the animators realised that several of the learners "wanted to read the papers". Most of them said that they read newspapers and magazines "when they could get them"; but even the material sent out regularly by the State Resource Centre was not used: "*Tholanavoil* is supplied to me but I do not read it", was a comment made by more than one of the animators, and it was clear from their homes that they did not in fact read very much, if anything. It is hard to see how anyone can teach others to read when they themselves do not in fact read. Apparently none of the agencies felt that this was a criteria worthy of making enquiry about.

General: We have already seen that the policy of the State and the University-run programmes in choosing villages because of their location or other convenience, coupled with a more rigid policy of appointing animators from the same village and indeed from the same colony, mean that the agency is often forced into finding - even persuading - someone who is reluctant to take on this demanding task, usually for the first time. Such a policy will mean that extra support will be needed to enable these people to build up their motivation, their confidence and their skills to engage in literacy teaching. But in fact, these agencies offered less in the way of support than the voluntary-body-run programme.

Selection procedures:

Although the State-run programme issued forms and received more applications than it had vacancies, most of the S animators said that they were first approached by the supervisor; only three applied of their own volition. The interview was seen as a formality. The V animators felt that the interview was more influential, though three had been approached first by the village leaders and one by the supervisor. All the U animators except one (who had volunteered to fill a vacancy left by an animator who had left) were apparently persuaded to take up the work by the supervisor and/or the village leader(s). There was a good deal of persuasion used, though few said it as clearly as the animator who reported that "the supervisor approached me directly and asked me to be the animator. Without knowing about my mind and without allowing me to decide freely, I was asked to organise a centre". Others echoed this approach: "The supervisor visited the village; he made me to write the application"; "the supervisor selected me, then I submitted the application". In at least two cases (both women), the animators were directed to take the task by (in one case) their husband and (in the other case) their father. When asked why they thought they had been chosen, only three of the S or U animators could give reasons ("my experience was, I think, the criterion", "I am unemployed and one of the academically qualified persons in the colony"). Nearly half the V animators were able to indicate what strengths they felt they had which would enable them to teach literacy to adults - perhaps a reflection of the more careful interviews which were conducted in this case.

CHAPTER 3: THE ANIMATORS: HOW THEY FEEL

Towards the job

Unless the animators feel that the task is one worth doing and one within their capabilities, they will not undertake the work with any measure of effectiveness. We tried to explore the animators' attitudes towards the task and towards themselves in relation to the task.

We asked all the first time animators why they were doing it. Three said for money and one said, "I expected some favour through the project like a loan or better job" (when he did not get anything, he admitted that he "got discouraged" and gave up the literacy work). Most of the rest gave social usefulness reasons in more or less traditional terms: "some of my friends were illiterate and so I was willing to do this work"; "I was at home wasting time, I want to do something useful, beneficial to the people and to my family". Some said they wanted their [Scheduled] caste "to come to life", and the context of the interview suggested the sentiment was genuine. One even said that she did this against the wish of her husband because she wants people to "come up in life".

Most (44) of the 52 animators said they liked the job, some in strong terms ("it's fun to be with them") and wished to continue - 20 of them even if they were not paid for the work ("I will do it without pay also"; "I will do the same work even if I am not paid"; "I will do the work without payment") - though 11 others indicated that they would only take the class if they were paid ("I will not do any job if I am not paid").

Their awareness of the task and what it entailed varied. Just as few of them were aware of what they themselves possessed to enable them to undertake the task, so few were unable to indicate what they felt the work needed. Nor could many of them identify clearly what they most liked and what they most disliked about the job. "I do not know what is the best and worst activity in the job"; "I am not able to decide and say ..", though others could. For example, "I like the training programmes"; "coming into contact with many people"; "being with the learners and teaching them"; "it's a self-fulfilling activity which helps me to forget my family problems and brings joy and happiness", or more specifically "organising the tour [outing]", dance, music, teaching singing or handicrafts, numeracy teaching games, telling riddles, discussion. Or the bad items: "when the learners have to be called out from their homes practically every day" (this was repeated often); "some learners come to the centre fully drunk"; "their slow learning"; "organising group chorus singing I hate"; and "maintaining registers". But on the whole, it is clear that these animators had not learned to look in any depth at what they were doing; their training had not led them to self-analysis or even awareness of their immediate environment.

On the other hand, most of the animators (32/52; this includes only one of the S animators however) were able to identify realistic developmental needs for their village. "Keeping the village streets clean; supply of water; co-operative activities; construction of houses" is one typical list. This was in many ways the strongest set of responses received from these animators, and many were practical suggestions - a primary health centre, a library, widening and cleaning the roads, a milk society, loans - especially "for self-employment for women", a spinning machine (in a weaving village), a

playground, a post office and shop, social forestry, a tailoring and carpentry centre, an association "to stop drinking" (from a male animator), "frequency of buses to be increased" and so on. And at least eight indicated that they were already engaged in such work on a voluntary basis: "I have discussed with the voluntary agency about the improvement of the village"; "I am hopeful of achieving this". There were of course some with negative or dependent attitudes: "I am not bothered about community problems"; "the village needs improvement in every aspect; it is the responsibility of government to solve the problems in this village" - which makes one wonder why these persons were selected as animators in the first place since their 'social mind' was not in tune with the work they were being asked to do. But there were more with positive attitudes towards development and with practical ideas for improvements, and several with positive intentions as well.

They were more aware of the material rather than the human resources available for the work. Half of them (24/52) were conscious of the lack of certain materials ("We wish to have more teaching learning materials") and had asked their supervisor for more materials but they complained that these were not forthcoming. One third could identify some of their major difficulties in helping the learners to learn - mainly helping them to overcome their problems and attend regularly, though nearly a half (22/52) of these animators indicated that they had no problems in teaching - a view which their other responses denied. Again half (25/52) of those questioned could make suggestions of ways to improve the working of the class: the provision of new supplementary readers, the provision of a separate classroom or of a sewing machine or of a radio set; new courses in handicraft skills, occupational activities and employment opportunities; and even "it will be better if you lengthen the period of teaching the learners" (several echoed this point).

Most of the V and U animators indicated that they would wish to continue to meet with their learners after the end of the course and some had already agreed to do so: "I have a plan to meet the learners. I have told them that I will help them even if the class is over"; "I can borrow some story books and give them to the learners"; "if they want to learn further, I will meet them and give them some story books to read" - though one pointed out that "once the programme is over, all the materials will be collected by the agency" (U). One of the animators spoke about "making the literacy class into a learning centre of occupational skills. Employment is a major problem and so employment opportunity should be created". Basket making and candle making were the skills she had in mind, having learned these from the agency, and she expressed her intention "to do it on a co-operative basis with the learners". But it was most marked that these attitudes and intentions did not on the whole exist among the S animators.

Only a quarter (11/52) of the animators indicated that they wished to maintain contact with the agency which was employing them at this time. Some said that they would wish to continue to work in literacy programmes but "with another agency"; "I would prefer to work here under a different agency". The attitudes to the agencies - mostly as represented by the supervisor - were on the whole negative: "if I am in town, I may casually peep in", but normally no ongoing relationship existed: loyalty had apparently not been built up by training and continuing support.

Towards themselves

Less than a third (most of them among the V animators - 7/15) could say that they thought that they possessed any special characteristics which would enable them to do this work. A sense of confidence was in many cases absent. "I am talented enough for the job but not confident enough"; "I did not try for any other job as I do not have the ability and moreover I am a woman". Their awareness of need was strong: "I need some new methods" was repeated again and again. And they noted that they had been consulted only over the location within the village of the building in which the class would be held and the timing of the class - and even on these matters in many cases (at least 22/52 and probably more) the decisions had been taken by others (village leaders, supervisor, even the MLA).

The lack of confidence is revealed by (among other things) their attitude to the preparation of teaching-learning materials for their learners or to the taking of other action on their own initiative. Although one animator said, "I have not prepared any materials because of my economic problem", the most usual reason given was the lack of direction or support from the supervisor: "I never thought about it, neither had the supervisor suggested that I do it", a view supported by another animator who said that she had never prepared any material by herself, nor had she been directed by the supervisor to do so, and by a third animator who described herself as "a beginner" who had "never prepared any material" by herself, nor had the supervisor helped her to prepare such material.

Nevertheless, a considerable number had prepared teaching-learning materials for their learners: "charts and pictures", "alphabet cards", "I arranged guest lectures". Following the training course, one of the animators prepared candle wax and cleaning powder in her centre; she also used newspapers and cinema posters for her teaching. Others pressed all sorts of material into service: "I advise the learners to read the wall posters"; "I use my personal tape recorder in the centre and play the cinema songs", replied one animator who had no television available. One of the animators spoke perceptively when she said: "I use books to motivate them. There is no criticism or discussion on the stories; the young women are interested in learning literacy and knowing things, whereas the older women are interested only in listening to stories". The number of animators among this group who had used in their classes different types of material obtained on their own initiative from various sources ("charts from government departments" etc) was considerable.

Nine of them used their own television for the learners though some viewed television negatively: "most of the days people are interested in viewing the television - television has demotivated the learners to attend the centres regularly", is a view shared by two or three of these animators. But it was not shared by others: "television is used for viewing good and useful programmes, it is a motivating device", said one animator who like others in this set used it to watch dramas, songs, dance, agricultural stories: "every Sunday [which is not a class day] we see the film, after that it is discussed with the learners".

Nearly a half of them (very few in the S programme) indicated that they were actively seeking a job; one or two had concrete plans for themselves.

The group then included some one third who had little or no confidence in themselves and who did very little beyond mechanical teaching, and a third who felt confident enough to take innovative action.

Towards the learners

All the animators - with hardly an exception - knew their learners well. Without consulting their registers, they knew how many and who attended regularly, who did not and why; how many were totally illiterate and how many were school drop-outs; and the ages of most of them. Virtually all could list at least ten, most of them 15 or more, of the names of the learners immediately. "Two of the learners had a family quarrel, so did not come to the centre any more".

When asked if they knew what the learners came to the class for (apart from literacy), most of them (38/52) could identify something that the learners came to the classes for (though one admitted that "the learners come to the centre to enable me to get my salary and most of them are my relatives", though even in this case, the animator was quite certain that the learners still wanted to learn literacy). The range was wide and varied - to learn about income and expenditure, to get a loan, to hear the news, to learn a craft or cooking or new agricultural equipment or mathematics, to improve their general knowledge, to get correct measure from the ration shops and so on. One said, "The widow learners come to gain courage and strength to do their job alone". Others said that the learners came so as not to depend on others: "they want to become independent persons by learning literacy skills"; "men feel that they should become literate before getting married". Many were clear that "the learners tend to link literacy skill with better job opportunity", though some of the animators realised that this was unrealistic: "I could not give what they expected, like a job. Their needs were not fulfilled. Being men, they had other concerns and so they did not take the class very seriously. Moreover, not all the learners were totally illiterate". Nevertheless, such intentions were seen to exist among the learners, and the identification of the intentions of the learners can be used as the basis for teaching literacy. But they all claimed that they did not have the materials to teach the learners what the learners wanted to learn. None of these animators apparently discussed the learning or the class activities with the learners.

The animators were divided about the motivation of the learners in regard to literacy itself. The reasons for learning to read given by the animators were the traditional ones: to read name boards, bus signs, cinema posters, film titles; to stop being cheated or to obtain a fair wage; to write letters and to learn to read documents; to help their children with their education. Thirty three of our 52 animators felt that the learners were motivated to learn (for example, "most of the learners are self-motivated. Some come to the centre without my calling them. They come with a lot of eagerness ... Many are of my own age and learning is a leisure activity", was the response of a younger animator). Another four felt that the motivation of the learners was mixed ("some learners are not well motivated; but others want to learn"; "they want to learn literacy but if there is work or a new film in the nearby theatre, all of them will be absent"). Only 8 felt negatively about the learners' motivation to learn. There were thus strongly positive attitudes towards the learners among many of these animators, and at the same time an awareness that the groups they were teaching were very mixed. It is not clear how their training has helped them to cope with this wide range of motivation and intentions.

And most of the animators could see something of the problems which faced the learners. More than thirty listed these problems in some detail. The statements were not just the traditional pointing to the competing demands of coolie work, house work and family needs (especially children's illnesses), though of course these featured in the responses. "Because all are labourers, they feel tired to sit after work; during the season, they do not come to the centre". Some went beyond this and clearly empathised with the learners: "after coming from work, they are tired, prepare food, fetch water; when they are late, they hesitate to come in the dark. Parents also discourage them"; "being daily wage labourers, the learners come to the centre only late in the evenings and tired. They have to cook at home after their work, feed their husbands and children before they could step out of their homes. Some husbands restrict their attending the literacy centres"; "after work they look tired; the water problem is acute, they have to go fetching water, look after their children, their husbands call them in the middle of the class. Many stopped coming to the class". "The learners do want to learn. However, they find it difficult to have one square meal a day. The water problem certainly affected the learners. Those responsible have never taken any concrete steps".

And these animators were aware of the problems the learners had once they came to the classes: "Some learners pick up fast and others are slow. I have to repeat. When it is done, the fast learners lose patience"; "it is difficult for me to make them write in the notebooks. The learners were shy to study and to be in such a set up [i.e. with lots of children present also]. When their answer was wrong, others laugh at them. So they tend to withdraw". "They don't easily understand and they forget easily. I have to catch their hands and help them to write"; "many dropped out because they felt shy to study among the children". "Due to work, they found it difficult to attend the literacy centre. They could not think of learning anything in the beginning. Then slowly they got used to it and picked up learning confidence". "In general they are enthusiastic, some days they are not. They became sociable and so the centre became an interesting one". "One learner after learning wrote a letter to his mother. The letter was corrected by me. There was a sense of achievement in the learner".

While these animators could so often see the achievements of the learners positively in the light of the very real problems of the learners, what they could not see was how they themselves could help with these problems; they had received no guidance on these matters and were too diffident to ask: "I need help from others to develop my teaching ability but I do not know whom to ask".

CHAPTER 4: THE ANIMATORS : TRAINING AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Teaching literacy to adults is a most demanding task, and it requires all the help animators can get - especially when there are so many demotivating factors in the home, in the village and in the class itself. Finding and building upon the motivating factors in the animator's environment is a difficult task, especially if the animator is left to do it alone. We asked the animators what they thought of the training and continuing support they received during their year's work.

Pre-service training

All the S animators had taken advantage of the 10-day training programme run specially for them by the field functionaries. They felt that the most useful part of it was the training in methods - communication skills, learning to teach and to speak. "I realised the need to communicate with others". Some felt there was more to it than this: "the animator's attitudes and approaches to teaching adults", "the exchange of ideas and discussion".

Similarly all the V animators had attended the 7-day residential training course run by the State Resource Centre at the Society's headquarters. Again the methods part was regarded as the most valuable, with one animator mentioning drama and another discussion. Only one animator felt this training was not valuable. Of the U animators, 17 of the 22 surveyed had taken the one day of training offered by the University "one month after the inauguration of the literacy centre" (as one animator put it). Four of the others had received no pre-service training at all. They could not mention the most useful parts of this training.

In-service training

The S programme offered three 2-day courses during the year; all the animators attended these. It is not clear what value the animators put upon these but one or two mentioned that they were able to pass on to the learners new knowledge on health, animal husbandry and family welfare, or that they had learned through "skill demonstration". The V agency offered three days of additional training. The most valuable part of this was seen by a large number of the participants to have been the session on evaluating ("ranking") the learners' progress. Two one-day courses were offered to the U animators, and all of them except one took at least one of these. Again the value to those who saw any value in them seems to have lain in the new knowledge they provided; but most of the animators could not identify any value in them.

It is therefore not surprising that the request for further training was rather muted. It is there nonetheless. "Inwardly I realised the need for training but was afraid to communicate to the supervisor even". Requests to "learn more about new methods of teaching literacy" featured from time to time in the interviews: "I felt the training was not enough and would like to attend more training programmes". Several of them said that they would attend such training if it were offered to them even if they were not paid, but others said that they would need to receive their travel expenses and a few indicated that they expected to be paid for attending such training.

These responses related to the willingness of these animators to take a further literacy course when the current one was finished. A number said that they would be willing to take another course, though several (especially the women) were limited in that they felt unable to go into another village or at least only into a village where they were known: "I cannot go to a different village for work"; "I cannot go to a different village as I am a woman"; "I want to continue the work even in a different village, but my parents will not allow". There is amongst a significant number of these animators a positive attitude towards the job which can be built upon.

Support: supervisors

All the animators saw their supervisor regularly, ranging from twice to four times every month. Half of them (27/52) said that these visits dealt solely with administrative matters: "It is purely an administrative meeting like checking attendance"; "to check records"; "only administrative concerns were done; not much interaction regarding the teaching". "he looks into the attendance register. I used to ask for learning materials from him which were never supplied". It is understandable that the supervisors would on the whole be reluctant to discuss the teaching in any detail as very few of them had any experience of teaching a literacy class themselves; but some were more helpful: "the supervisor takes the class sometimes, otherwise he writes the remark, 'improve the attendance'". Others of the animators said that the supervisor had told them to get more learners, but did not indicate how they were to do this; they felt they were left on their own to do it. Indeed, the supervisor seems on occasion to have been more of a demotivator than a motivator for these animators. Thus many said that when meeting the supervisor, they "only listened to what he had to say", but "did not ask him" about their problems or about new ideas of teaching or new teaching materials. "I do not talk about personal matters"; "nothing more than the administrative concerns: he also does not ask much". In many cases of course there is a gender gap - the supervisors are men, while most of the animators in this sample were women. The V animators recorded that they talked with their supervisor about classroom matters and teaching methods more frequently. When asked who they would turn to for assistance with their teaching problems, half of this group (7/15) said "the supervisor". Very few of the animators in the other programmes saw the supervisor as an assistant to them in teaching literacy.

It is clear from all the responses and from the meetings of animators we held that the gatherings of animators with the supervisors were valued as an opportunity to meet with the other animators more than to meet the supervisor.

Support: other

Most of the S animators (12/15) and of the U animators (17/22) (but only 4/15 of the V animators) taught in villages where there was more than one class (centre). In most (but not all) of these cases, the animators got together and sought help from each other: "we work hand in hand, so that we are a strong force". Regularly the animators reported that they met each other and talked about their classroom problems: "I meet the other animators very frequently, ask them how many learners come to their centres and what do they teach etc". "I am a link person for the others - we meet frequently and share common concerns"; "we help each other in running the centres; we are very friendly"; "there are three centres: all the three animators meet in the village often as friends"; "I used to consult my co-animators regarding any doubts".

Some of the animators also met with the other development workers in their villages: "there is one more adult education centre in the village. The animator's name is G... We discuss with each other and with the nutrition organiser". This was not of course universal; some said that because of family feuds, caste and other matters, they did not relate to other local animators or development workers: "there is one other adult education centre but we hardly meet because of caste". This is strikingly illustrated by the two animators from the same village who reported separately: "there is a balwadi [nursery] teacher and nutrition organiser and noonday meal organiser in the village. These persons stay near to my house. We meet once in a week to discuss problems in the scheme, a friendly chat", and alternatively "a balwadi teacher residing next to my house but we do not talk due to a family quarrel". Another case is particularly revealing: "there is one more centre for women in the same colony. Both the animators meet often. He takes the class in the female centre, but the female animator does not come to the male centre" (interview with supervisor).

When asked to whom they would turn (apart from the supervisor) for help with their literacy work, it is thus not surprising that several (13/52) of the animators replied "other animators". One or two mentioned husbands ("I consult my husband when there is any difficulty") or village leaders. But it is clear that most of them felt that there was no-one they could turn to.

CHAPTER 5: TRACER STUDY

We sought to find out from one of the agencies what those who had previously served as literacy animator were now doing after a lapse of several years: for if our work with these persons had been effective in building up their confidence and motivation (without which a literacy programme cannot be successful), then we would expect to find them still engaged in some form of village development programme, either on their own initiative or helping some other agency.

A rural agency we first approached was unable to trace the past animators after a period of five years - a revealing statement about the relationships created with those who worked for them as animators in an area of considerable stability of population. We therefore worked with the Women's Voluntary Service of Madras.

Women's Voluntary Service of Tamil Nadu (Madras)

This is a non-profit, non-sectarian organisation devoted to women's literacy and development. For the past 15 years, it has been working in both the rural and urban areas, running hostels for working women, creche centres for children, training camps for rural women in public co-operation, family welfare orientation camps, mass marriages etc. It has provided adult education (literacy) classes for women since its inception in 1972; from 1979 to 1987, as many as 28,441 women have been in these classes. Its current programme of literacy consists of 100 centres in the city (4000 women) and 300 centres in Pallavaram and Tambaram panchayats and Paddapai Block (12,000 women). WVS has also undertaken post-literacy and follow-up programmes for some 18,225 women who have successfully completed the basic literacy course: the current programme of this kind covers 4000 women in the city area.

The tracer study covered 15 women past animators who were brought to the agency's headquarters and asked to complete a questionnaire (in Tamil). The group was typical of the other three groups as follows:

- 3 were Christian, 12 Hindu; all save one were married, with children now aged from 1 year to 9 years; one was a graduate, 14 had passed SSLC, and all save two had additional vocational skills (tailoring, embroidery, binding, nursing). They were however unusual in that they had been employed as animator for several years by the same agency (in some cases as many as six years).

- All of them indicated that they enjoyed their work as an animator and that they thought they had done it well to their satisfaction.

- Since completing their work, they have not undertaken any regular paid employment; nor do they work for daily wages. All their husbands are employed.

- Half of them (8/15) are active members of a local association (a sangam), but 10/15 said that their family members are not members of any organisation at community level.

Looking back on their training, these past animators said that they received

in all 21 days of training conducted by the W V S, the S R C, the Directorate of Non-formal/Adult Education (the Government of India Department in Delhi), and the local Shramik Vidyapeeth (government skill training centre). The most useful parts of this training were seen to be information on prohibition and diseases (TB and leprosy), and the preparation of teaching-learning materials such as awareness charts during in-service training. Most of them said that the training was very useful "to learn some unknown things"; one said that it was useful "to do the field work".

Several of the animators had prepared literacy and numeracy games with the help of the learners; they had informed the supervisor (whom they saw regularly, some three times every month). Most of them have continued seeing their groups of learners after the end of the class, but this was hindered by their serving as animator in subsequent years.

It was not clear from this tracer study that these animators had been encouraged by their training and experience of being a literacy animator to undertake any other form of development work in their own community. Once in the field of literacy, this seems to have become the limit to their activities and interest. But the special nature of this group - an urban agency which enabled them to continue to serve in this way - must be taken into account: and a rural tracer study is needed to see what (if anything) rural animators who are unable to continue to serve in literacy programmes do after the end of their courses.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The first thing to be said by way of conclusion is that the size of the sample taken for study means that more work is needed before we can be sure that the findings represent a proper picture. But we feel that we have proved the point that the methodology is adequate and the possible findings will be significant. We therefore recommend that similar surveys should be undertaken, adapting the interview schedules to local conditions and to the enquirer's needs, for we feel sure that they would yield fruit.

The findings then are presented as the results of a pilot study.

Are we selecting the right people? Even allowing for exaggerations, bias and gloss, it seems to us that two groups of animators emerge:

a) there are those (about one third of our sample) who have negative attitudes about themselves, about the task and about the learners. It must be noted that we are not talking here of "not having a social mind"; we are speaking of people who believe that even if given proper training and support, they cannot help the learners to learn and therefore they do not want to do the job. While our training may in some cases help to develop more positive attitudes among some of these, most of these should never in our opinion have been invited to serve as animators. Some of these have low educational attainments, but the attitudes are not entirely related to the level of education received; some with SSLC have negative attitudes while some with lower grades have positive attitudes. It is important that our selection procedures do not push us into using such people as animators in future: our animators should be people who believe in the task and in themselves.

b) there is a larger group (some two thirds) who possess positive attitudes towards themselves, towards the task and towards the learners (though very few have positive attitudes towards the agency which employs them). It is this group which we should concentrate on.

Selecting the animators

As we have seen, the criteria for the selection of animators is four-fold: a compatible social background, an adequate educational level, good standing in the local community, and a 'social mind' - i.e. a sense of concern and a willingness to work with those in need.

One of the reasons why some ill-suited persons are appointed as animators is the practice of selecting the villages for literacy programmes first and then looking around for a local animator. An insistence on drawing the animator from the same village or colony will in some cases mean that it is impossible to run classes in some villages without pressing into service persons who are reluctant, ill-equipped and unsuitable. The danger of the class ceasing to exist before it has completed any useful task or of the class continuing to the end with falling attendance and falling interest is in our opinion harmful to the whole cause of literacy. There are alternatives available, such as the use of another experienced animator from another nearby centre; we notice that some animators (especially the women) are unwilling or unable to travel to other villages to conduct evening literacy classes but this is not always true, and the use of already experienced animators from other centres has much to commend

it, both from the learners' point of view and from the animator's point of view. But if this or some other solution is not possible, then it is better not to run such a centre and to seek another more suitable location than to run a bad class.

Of course it is not always possible to identify those who are likely to leave during the course of the year's programme for some reason or other, mainly for family reasons. But it is possible to identify some of these - young girls who are likely to get married, young men who are seeking other employment and will take up the first full-time job that comes along etc. In those we choose to employ as literacy animator, the agency needs to ensure that a greater sense of commitment exists and to foster this sense of commitment with enhanced job satisfaction, so that fewer animators will leave at the first opportunity.

Training and supporting the potential

Those who select animators seem to assume that all these attitudes are ready-made. Their training is designed to provide new knowledge and skills rather than to develop the confidence and motivation of the animators. But it is clear that those animators who possess positive attitudes still need considerable training and support, for there is much within their rural environment which will demotivate them and little which will strengthen their motivation and confidence. This task - enabling the animators to identify those factors which will strengthen their motivation and build up their confidence - is one of the tasks of the agency; it is part of the concern which every agency owes to the people they ask to help them with this difficult task.

It is unrealistic to expect that the sort of attitudes we wish the animators to show will grow naturally. They have to be nurtured, fed, cultivated, developed and strengthened. We need to build up commitment even where it already exists in part; we need to build up confidence even where it already exists in part; just as we need to build up knowledge and skills of teaching even where these already exist in part.

The role we are asking the animators to perform is a very difficult one. We must return to this time and again, for until the agencies themselves understand how difficult the role is and how much support the animators will need in order to perform it adequately, they will not be able to help the animators as they should. Literacy animators are essentially change-agents, because their work if properly done will lead to social change. They need to be much better trained and much better supported in this work. For example, if it takes a long time to help villagers to 'become aware', how can we expect animators to undertake this task if they themselves have only had some two or three days of 'awareness training'? Until the animators not only <u>can</u> do but <u>do</u> do what they are asking the learners to do (be aware, or to read regularly, etc) they will be ineffective. Much longer and more effective training, using participatory methods, is essential for the success of the programme.

There is one aspect of the support of the animators which concerns us greatly. When so many of the animators are women, the training and support of these animators must take account of women's development. Women are increasingly being used as trainers, and it is not impossible that some of the supervisors too could be women.

Using the potential

It is not difficult, given the time and willingness of the agency to undertake the task, to identify the strongly positive attitudes among many of the animators. But building these up, maintaining them and utilising them will call for positive attitudes on the part of the agencies towards the animators. And in some cases, as we have seen, these do not exist. Until the agencies drop their negative approach to the animators and come to accept that the animators are on the whole willing and able to work, they will not be able to encourage these animators to make the best use of their own talents.

The following suggestions have arisen out of our work or have been made to us during the course of our discussions:

a) Commitment: many animators are or wish to be committed to the programme. But they will only become or remain committed if they see commitment from the supervisors, project officers and agencies who work with them. Many animators apparently believe that such commitment is lacking and thus find it hard to retain their own sense of belief in the value of what they are being asked to do.

b) Recognition: continuity of contact between animators and learners is necessary for effective learning. To this end, animators need encouragement, feelings of recognition and success which are in themselves rewards for their hard work, and better incentives to ensure that they do not leave for other jobs. Rarely do the agencies we visited offer tokens of appreciation to the animators for the work they are doing: a certificate of completion of the course might be one possible form of recognition for the animator.

c) Experience: an experienced animator is very often better than a new animator. Many rural animators build up valuable experience which is wasted because (unlike the urban animator) they are not used again. Animators should be encouraged to continue to use and develop further their newly gained skills and insights. A permanent cadre of trained animators (what was called by one of our respondents "a manpower guild" - though many of these animators and indeed most of the long-serving ones are in fact women) might be built up and drawn upon. The process by which each agency selects its own animators without liaison is seen to be wasteful. Some animators even now transfer easily from the service of one agency to that of another. It is surely a better use of scarce human and financial resources to use an animator more than once.

One suggestion was for regional registers of experienced and valued animators. This is not centralised selection of animators. Our discussions have strongly suggested that voluntary bodies in particular prefer animator selection to be done by an independent and expert body rather than by a bureaucratic body; and others have suggested that universities in particular lack the expertise to make such selection, that the criteria they use are not always appropriate. Rather the suggestion is that some record be kept of those who have served as literacy animator with distinction (and there are many of these even among the small sample we were able to meet) and that this list should be made available to all those bodies who are planning and implementing a new programme of literacy.

d) Attitudes: where agencies hold negative attitudes towards the animators, the animators tend more and more to behave inadequately. Agencies become demotivators of the animators the more they criticise them. The agencies need to be much more positive towards the animators whose commitment, experience, insights and expertise are often greater than those of their supervisors and project officers.

Using the animators

There are many ways in which those animators who possess relevant experience and positive attitudes can be used by the agency:

a) by being invited to teach post-literacy in their own village with the same group of learners or literacy with a new group of learners. It is not always worthwhile constantly to move on to new villages rather than consolidate in a village in which progress is being made. Such an approach would indicate to the village concerned the commitment of the agency.

b) by being invited to run a centre in a neighbouring village. We found a willingness on the part of some (not all) of the animators to undertake this work provided it was in a village where they were known. This would of course be more suitable to daytime classes than to evening work.

c) by being invited to offer help informally to newer animators in neighbouring villages; their advice and support and assistance through the visits which they could make to other animators in nearby villages during the daytime (out of class time) to discuss the work would once again indicate the concern of the agency for their animators. Some would do this without remuneration; for others, a small sum could be drawn from the training allocation within the existing budget.

d) by being invited to help the agency in planning the next phase of the programme - in choosing the villages to be covered, the animators to select, in the preparation of teaching-learning materials, etc. The use of 'experts' to write primers and other materials, ignoring the animators, is surely unacceptable: it stresses academic knowledge rather than practical experience. It tells the animators who the agency considers to be important (the academic) and who is thought to be unimportant (the animator). Once again, the negative attitudes of the agencies towards the animators need to be replaced by positive ones.

e) by being invited to help plan and conduct training courses (both pre-service and in-service) of new animators. They have much to offer from their own experience - often more than the trainers have.

Much of this is already being done in several places. It needs to become more systematic. It should be the urgent task of every agency to try to find ways of using those talented and experienced animators they have helped to create.

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This last statement is perhaps the most important message of this survey. Our final conclusion reiterates what has been the theme of this report from the start - that there are many trained, experienced and committed animators in the villages of Tamil Nadu - and of course elsewhere.

Not to use these persons is not only wasteful of developed or potential human resources. It reveals an attitude on the part of the agencies which suggests that these animators are no longer valued or wanted. Once they have been used by the agencies for their own purposes, they can be dispensed with. Such a dehumanising attitude towards the animators suggests that the agency no longer cares for them. This apparent lack of caring was a theme which came through on several occasions in our discussions.

Any lack of commitment to the literacy programme then would seem to come more from the supervisors and agencies than from the animators - though the latter too often lose their own motivation when they see the apparent lack of motivation of those 'above' them.

There are signs in some places that this is being appreciated. Experienced animators are being used in training and in planning new adult literacy programmes. Those who have already been trained are on occasion used as resource persons when they attend further training courses. But much more can be done to recognise these valuable persons who have given much committed and relatively unremunerated service to their own local communities. We owe it to them to use them further. They are after all our partners.

APPENDIX: AN URBAN GROUP

Introduction

Although the main study was aimed at animators in rural areas, an opportunity arose to undertake the same study with a small group of urban literacy animators, those engaged by the YWCA in Madras. It is argued here that teaching literacy in a town or city is different from conducting a literacy class in a village, for the rural environment is often without any of the support systems which an urban environment can provide for literacy. The relevance of learning literacy in a town is much more apparent than in a village, and thus the motivation of the learners is likely to be very different. And above all it is much easier to employ animators more than once and thus to build up a team of experienced animators who are tied to the agency by long years of service and friendship. Since we did not possess any parallel urban group against which to test the findings of this particular group of animators, we decided to present the findings on their own in an appendix to the main report.

The process was slightly different from that employed in the main survey. The study was conducted through a questionnaire. The prepared questionnaire was in English and was given to the animators to complete with some translation facilities; but it became clear that there was some difficulty in understanding the questions. The questions were thus presented a second time to the animators collectively at one of their meetings, and the answers were written 'en masse'. Some of the responses thus were similar rather than individual, though no suggestions were made by the researcher or supervisor who conducted the session.

The questions we sought to answer through this survey were the same as those in the main survey:

1. Did the animators feel that there was a distance between them and the learners?
2. What are the animators' attitudes towards the learners?
3. What are the attitudes of the animators towards the task?
4. What are the attitudes of the animators towards themselves?
5. What are the attitudes of the animators towards the agency?

This report has been edited from the original written by Miss R Padmini, a student on the Master's course in Adult and Continuing Education in the University of Madras.

1. Distance between animators and learners?

Eight of the eleven animators came from the same 'village" in which their class was held; one lived one km away (though she took half an hour to walk to the centre) and the other two lived some seven kms away. Thus most of them were 5 to 10 minutes walk away from the centre; the rest were within a relatively easy bus ride from the centre.

All the animators and all the learners were women. Seven of the eleven animators were married and had families consisting of from three to five children.

All the animators except two belonged to the Scheduled Caste; all the learners belonged to the Scheduled Caste. Eight of the animators were Hindus, the other three were Christian; the learner groups were mostly Hindu. The age range of these animators was from 24 to 42; six were under 29 years of age, 4 were between 32 and 37, and one animator was 42 years old. On the whole the learners were slightly younger: in six out of the eleven centres, an average of 20 learners were younger than the animator and in the rest, an average of 15 learners (half the class) were younger than the animator. In the centre taken by the animator who was 42 years old, all the learners were younger.

The animators had no other occupation than their literacy teaching. The majority of the learners were domestic helpers and others worked as daily coolies. One of the learners was a self employed vendor.

The educational level of each of the animators was almost the same. All of them had taken their school final examinations; and all but one of them had received a certificate for the training they had received in the teaching of adults. Two of them knew bookbinding and held a certificate for this. One of them was skilled in tailoring and puppetry.

The animators also read: they were all provided with women's magazines by the agency and they made use of them in their classes. Newspapers were obtained for the learners. The agency also gave them Yetram, a magazine specially published by the State Resource Centre for Tamil Nadu for literacy animators.

The animators were chosen through an informal interview conducted by the members of the Adult Education Committee of the YWCA and the Supervisor. Four of them had heard about the work from the Supervisor or another animator and applied for it; three of them were recommended by the 'village' president, two through another animator and the Supervisor, and one through the Project Officer. All these animators had been working with the YWCA without a break for a number of years ranging from two years to eight years.

None of them did any other form of social work. Two of them were involved in local politics. They were on the whole somewhat better off than the learners as well as being better educated. But some of them lived only on the meagre salary paid for their literacy teaching as their husbands were unemployed.

The agency and the animators used the term 'village' to represent the urban slum in which they worked, for it has many of the same characteristics and some of the same structures as rural villages.

2. The animators and the learners

It is clear that the animators knew their learners well. Some of them took more than one class, but they still knew the learners by name.

The animators were taught how to maintain a register in which the 'village' demographic status, literacy levels, social status etc were recorded. This provided a base-line survey of the 'village' taken prior to the start of the programme. Attendance was marked in the register so that the animators knew the rate of regularity and irregularity of attendance and drop-out rates. In some classes, an average of 18 (out of 30) attended regularly. Drop-outs in some centres were 5 or 6, in other centres they were 2 to 3 only.

On the whole the animators felt they were being successful. Eight out of the eleven animators helped half (15) of their class to become fully literate; in six centres, 15 of the learners acquired partial literacy skills, and in another 5 centres, 10 of the learners were semi-literates. After the ten months' programme, in ten centres, only 5 learners remained completely illiterate, and in one centre the number of illiterates was as high as 10. The performance of the literacy centres was felt to be in general good; the involvement of the learners and the animators in the total learning process was felt to be considerable.

The animators were aware that some of the learners came to their centres for other reasons than to learn literacy. A number came to learn about the availability of medical facilities and to get help to solve the sanitation problems in the locality. All of them wanted to learn handicrafts to increase their income levels; almost all of them wanted to learn some useful and income generating handicrafts like agarbathi, candle making and sewing. Some of them came to the centre to learn to fill up bank forms. In one of the centres, the learners hailed from Andhra Pradesh and they wanted to learn the local language Tamil for functional purposes; they were employed as wage labourers.

Other learners came to the centres to learn about transport facilities, bus boards, and the correct amount of their fares and wages, "they don't want to be cheated". One of the animators said that her learners came to the centre to learn about 'society': the area was the location of migrant workers where all the incomers were quite new to one another; hence they felt the need of knowing other people and coming close to one another. All the learners were said to be very eager to learn to write the names of their family members.

The animators were also aware of the learners' problems. All the learners had family problems, most of the time due to poverty and sometimes because of non-co-operative in-laws and husbands. Most of the animators helped the learners by giving advice, but two of the animators said that they could not do anything to solve the learners' problems. Three of the animators had guided their learners into starting cottage industries; this would help them to alleviate their poverty. One of the animators involved herself with her learners by going to their houses and sharing their difficulties. She also tried to settle their disputes. Another animator mentioned that she advised small family norms to overcome poverty.

Six out of the eleven animators said that their learners did not have any major problem in learning. In the other centres, the problems ranged from difficulties in remembering alphabets to difficulties in writing and slow

learning. One animator mentioned that the learners learned more quickly from co-learners rather than from the teacher. In centres where Telugu was the mother tongue, the learners found it hard to learn Tamil.

On the whole the animators regarded the learners positively; the learners were motivated to learn but their poor economic condition created problems for their learning. Thus the animators tried to motivate them to start some cottage industry to increase their income.

3. The animators and the job

All the animators said that they liked the job, that they got satisfaction from teaching the illiterates. Six out of the eleven mentioned that their close contact with the learners made them happy, and they felt proud that they were being sought after for help at the time of their troubles. Three of them felt quite content and happy about their job, that they were doing something to create awareness among the learners. One animator said that she felt happy that she enlightens the people who are in darkness. On the whole all the animators liked the job and were quite content with what they were doing.

When asked what they did not like about the job, the difficulties they identified ranged from accommodation to lack of interest on the part of some of the learners. Two of the animators mentioned lack of space and ventilation. Another two mentioned lack of sanitary facilities. Quarrels between the learners also created problems for some, as did the lack of motivation of some of the learners. Animators approached the 'village' leaders to settle accommodation problems, if any. One or two animators mobilised their learners and took them to the City Corporation Office to ask for proper sanitary facilities; they agreed to work together in such matters.

There were however some drawbacks. The majority (8/11) of the animators said that the irregular attendance of the learners made them discouraged and three of them mentioned the lack of punctuality as the cause of their unhappiness; they felt that the regular attendance of the learners motivated one another. The animators were also unhappy at the non-co-operation of village leaders and at the lack of space. One complained that the learners in her centre wanted her to go to their homes each day and invite them personally to come to the centre.

In what ways did the animators help the learners to overcome their learning problems? The response of the animators was rather similar. They said that they used visual materials like flash cards, picture charts and flanellograph; the use of these materials was taught to them during their literacy training. They also said that they asked the learners to practice at home regularly to help their retention.

The agency provided basic teaching materials such as primers, notebooks, board, pencils, newspapers etc. They also supplied sewing machines to some centres. All the animators prepared picture charts, letter cards and card boards in order to facilitate learning literacy skills. Training for preparing these materials was given during the initial training period. One animator said that she prepared supplementary readers and other materials for her learners. Another animator said that she used diagrams to explain to the learners. Some used story books to make the learning interesting.

Even though only three of the animators had television sets at home, all the animators watched telecast education programmes; they also encouraged their learners to watch the same, and afterwards they discussed the programme in the class.

Almost all the animators said that they were willing to take another literacy course. One reason for liking the job was that they could finish their household activities well outside the class hours; since this job had less working hours than many other jobs, the animators had enough time for cooking and the care for their domestic concerns. One animator however cited family non-co-operation as the reason for her unwillingness to take another course. The majority of them are not willing to work if they are not paid; in two cases the animators are the only earning members in their family. Three of the animators said they were willing to take another literacy course even if they were not paid.

4. The animator and herself

When asked what skills the animators felt they possessed to help them with their task, some of them did not mention the skills they in fact possessed, for example book-binding and tailoring. However, all the animators indicated that they were skilled in singing. Singing practice was given as a part of the training course to the animators; they were instructed to teach the learners through songs. This may be the reason why all the animators mentioned singing as an important skill.

The training course was clearly important to these animators. They all felt that they had gained courage and self-confidence to face the adult learners after the one month training given by the agency. Apart from the singing, some of them mentioned acting and six of them said that they now possessed teaching skills. Three of the animators mentioned eloquence as an ability they possessed to be a good animator, and four of them felt that an ability to adapt themselves to the surroundings was an added quality to be a good animator which they had.

But on the whole the animators still did not seem to have a very high opinion of themselves. Some of the animators felt that they were not equipped for any other job and hence they were not searching for any other job. Five of the eleven had sought the job of literacy animators, having heard of it from different sources such as project officer, supervisor, village leader or another animator. The others were persuaded to take the task. Every one of the animators mentioned that she was a bit reluctant in the beginning. The reason given was lack of courage and self-confidence. Two of the animators, being outsiders, were scared to face their adult learners because they did not know how the learners would react. But after the one month training course, they gained confidence so that they could face the adult learners in the classes and teach them.

5. The animator and the agency

These animators clearly had a high regard for the agency for which they worked and looked to it for a good deal of their continuing support.

All the animators had received pre-service training for one month. The main thrust of the programme was preparing teaching-learning materials and methods of approaching adult learners. Subsequent to this, they had ten days

training at the YWCA. They learned handicrafts and learning through games and songs. All the animators felt that they should have had more training.

On a continuing basis, the animators met the supervisor regularly. Most of the animators (10/11) said that they met the supervisor once in every ten days; the other animator met the supervisor daily - they were from the same area.

These meetings were usually concerned with teaching matters - materials and methods. The animators clarified their doubts which arose in the lessons. Ideas and guidance about teaching handicrafts were obtained from the supervisor. One animator mentioned that she discussed the learners' needs with the supervisor. The animators expressed their need to be skilled in public speaking; they would welcome more training.

Apart from the supervisor, the animators clearly looked to each other for some of their support. There was a high level of co-operation between these animators. All of them except two lived in nearby places and so they met each other almost every day. They were very helpful to each other. They talked about the problems concerning the centres and arranged interaction sessions among the learners. They also talked about the problems faced by the learners and how they tackled those problems. One animator stressed the need of having the support from everyone, including the village leaders. One or two of them mentioned doctors also as a source of support.

These animators clearly felt that they had much to offer to the agency. All of them were experienced; they held a very impressive record in this, with two to eight years unbroken literacy teaching experience. But they were not involved in the selection of the centre; this was done by the 'village' heads with the learners.

The animators had clear ideas how the work of the centres could be improved. Three of them said that they needed audio visual equipment to show films and documentaries to the learners; others suggested the use of television educational programmes to facilitate learning. Two of them had asked for proper ventilation and more space for their centre. Several of them had asked for newspapers.

All of them had ideas about follow-up to their courses. Four of them suggested that the learners should form a union or organisation to start cottage industries. They believed that handicrafts should be taught in such continuing education classes. The animators had talked about the advantages of continuing education in their adult education classes and had encouraged the learners to come to classes even after the literacy course had finished.

And all the animators had ideas about the development of the places in which they taught. The suggestions were mostly in the areas of cleanliness and hygiene. They also stressed immunisation and child care. Two of them suggested that the eradication of superstition and the bringing of awareness would help the development of their community. Some also suggested the encouragement of small scale industry and small savings.

The agency was regarded highly by the animators; all of them had good things to say about the YWCA. They indicated that they would like to keep in touch with it even after they had finished the course. All of them would like to come back to teach but three of them would prefer a permanent government job rather than this.

TABLES

	Animators			Learners		
	S	V	U	S	V	U
Caste						
SC	13	12	21	13	12	21
BC	2	3	1	2	1	1
Mixed					2	
Gender						
Female	15	8	19	15	8	19
Male		7	3		6	3
Mixed					1	
Religion						
Hindu	12	12	16	15	12	15
Christian	3	3	5		3	
Mixed						7
Ages						
range	17-33	17-35	16-36			
16-19	9	4	7			
20-29	4	8	7			
30+	2	3	5			
learners in general:						
older than animator				11	3	3
younger					3	10
same				1	1	8
Same village						
same	15	6	22			
colony		4				
other place		2				
own home:						
own	9	3	19			
other		12	3			
not known	6					
Job						
unempl	15	6	15			
empl		4	7			
Type of job:						
agric	14	7	6			
non-agric	1	4	16			
Marital status						
single	10	10	8			
married	5	5	14			

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

We print here the schedule (slightly amended) which we used (after extensive piloting and discussion) in the above survey: those who use it should adapt it to meet their own needs and not take it simply as it stands. We ourselves would make some alterations to it now. The questionnaire used in the YWCA survey was based on this schedule: the tracer study questionnaire was simpler but included a section about what activities the animators had done since ending their literacy animators' programme: for reason of space, these two parts of the survey are not printed here.

Notes to the interviewer:

1. If possible, take an assistant with you to record responses: if you take a taperecorder, make sure it is working before you go and take a spare set of cells with you.
2. Record precisely what is said: do not rewrite.
3. Do not suggest things to the animator to help him/her; do not prompt.
4. On the other hand, if the animator does not answer the question but says something different, then repeat the question (sometimes using different words) until we get an answer which seems to fit the question.
5. Sometimes you must accept that the animator cannot answer the question at all; in that case, pass on to the next section.
6. Feel free to explore the subject for yourself with direct or indirect questions: do not feel tied to the list below. For example, if the animator makes an interesting statement, you can supplement your enquiry by asking her, "Why do you say that?" etc
7. On the other hand, do not take too much time; the interview should not take longer than 45 minutes.
8. Please remember that we want to find out about the attitudes and opinions of the animator, what they think or feel, not so much facts.
9. Try to pilot this interview schedule twice before starting on the real research; and try to see for yourself exactly what we are trying to find out in each section.

Note: the word 'Centre' used here means the class meeting.

SECTION 1: PERSONAL DATA

1a) Collect the following **personal data** (tick each item as you ask them): name; name of village they live in; if they have recently moved; gender; caste; religion; age; whether married or single; whether living with parents or with husband; whether in nuclear or extended family; number and ages of children if any.

1b) Ask about **education**: a) at school (even if failed or did not complete the course or take the leaving examination); b) since leaving school (craft courses, technical training, formal and nonformal programmes etc), both certificated and non-certificated.

1c) Ask if they feel they possess any **personal skills** without formal training.

1d) Ask if they do much **reading** now at home: if so, what? - magazines, newspapers, books; how do they get this material? do they borrow from the library etc?

2. OCCUPATIONS AND SOCIAL STATUS

We want to know about the occupations and social status of the animator and his/her family:

2a) Ask if the animator has any paid job other than being animator - whether it is monthly paid or a daily wage job. How many years/months have they been working at that job? If they have recently changed their job, what was the previous job? Do they work inside or outside the village? And how much do they earn (apart from the animator job)? If it is only part-time, how many hours do they work?

2b) Ask them if they have any unpaid job - for example, social work with a voluntary body or political organisation etc; if so, how many years/ months have they been working at it? What kind of work do they do?

2c) And (for women) ask them what is the job of their father/husband; (for men) if their wife has any paid or unpaid job outside of the home.

2d) Ask whether any member of their family holds any position of status in the village or area around; whether they or members of their family are members of any village formal or informal body or organisation; whether members of their family own land, and if so, how much.

3. THE ADULT EDUCATION/DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

We next turn to the programme they are working in as animator.

3a) Ask them the name of the village in which their animator work takes place; if this is different from the village they now live in, ask them whether they have any connection with that village - e.g. if they once lived there. How far is it from their home village?

3b) Ask them if the Centre is held in their own home/garden or in some other building; whether it is at the heart of the village/colony/hamlet or outside the village.

3c) If the Centre is not in their own house, we want to know if it is a long way from their home or if it is nearby. So ask them whether their home is in the centre of the village/hamlet/colony or on the edge; how far away the Centre is from where they live; and how they get to the Centre - by bus/walk/cycle/other means

Do they feel that the Centre is held in a place which is both accessible to the learners? and which is acceptable to the learners?

3d) Does the animator know if there are any other adult education/ development Centres in the village; if so, how many; who runs them? How often does the animator meet with other animators and micro-level development workers in the same village/area? How useful does he/she feel these meetings are?

3e) Does the animator know who chose the venue for the Centre? Who chose the timing of the class meeting?

4. KNOWING THE LEARNERS

We want to know how well the animator knows the learners, so ask him/her

4a) How many learners are regular attenders? how many come occasionally? how many have dropped out altogether? Do not let the animator look at the register but get them to say what he/she thinks.

4b) Does the animator know how many of the learners are completely illiterate and how many are school drop-outs? If the animator does not know, say so.

4c) Does the animator think that the majority of the learners are older or younger than the animator? Perhaps the animator can give the age of the oldest and the youngest learners in the group.

4d) Does the animator know what are the main occupations of the learners; the religion; the caste or class of the group of learners?

4e) Ask the animator to say what else, other than literacy, do the learners come to the class for? what else do they want to learn? Ask this question first, before you ask what the animator thinks the learners want to learn literacy for; how do they want to use literacy?

5. THE ANIMATOR'S TASK

Next, we want to see how the animator thinks about the tasks involved in being an animator. So we want to know:

5a) Is this the first time they have been an animator? Ask for details of all other previous occasions - date, place; type of programme; length of time etc

5b) Ask the animator why they do this job. They will probably give you a general reason like "to teach literacy, to do good" etc. So go on to ask other questions: would they do it if they were not paid? if they got the offer of another job, would they give up the task of animator?

5c) Ask them if they like doing the job. All of them will say 'Yes'; so try to ask them what it is about the job that they like - what are the nice things, the rewarding things, the things that please them, make them feel good. Do not suggest things to them, but you could ask what part of the activity of being an animator they like the best.

Equally, ask them about the nasty things, what part of the activity of being an animator they like the least.
In the end, they may not be able to answer these two questions, so spend some time on them and then pass on to the next set.

5d) Another difficult question for you as interviewer. We want to know if they would like to be an animator again, or if they dislike the work so much that they will never do it again. Some of them will reply that they cannot be an animator again for one reason or another. That is not the question. The question is, would they like to do it again? Would they do it - in the same village? in a village they are familiar with? in another nearby village they do not know well?

5e) We want to know how they were appointed as animator this time (not the first time); whether they applied for the job; whether they asked anyone to help them get the job, to recommend them; or whether someone (who?) came to ask them to take up the job? Were they reluctant to do it when first asked? If so, why? Did they have an interview - formal or informal? if so, who by and where? And what do they think they possessed which would make them a good animator?

6. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

And now for training: not just the formal pre-service and the less formal in-service training programmes offered by the agency but also the on-going support they receive while engaged in the task.

6a) What pre-service training did they receive? where did this take place? for how long? who conducted it and what happened?

What was the most useful part of this pre-service training which helped them most with their animator's activities?

6b) Ask the same questions about in-service training: what kind of training; where; how long; who gave it; what happened.

What was the most useful part of this in-service training which helped them most with their animator's activities?

6c) Ask if the animator has ever said to anyone that they would like to go to some more training courses? (If you ask them if they would like to go to more courses, almost everybody will say 'yes'; so one test is to see if they have ever expressed this opinion to anybody else before you met them).

6d) Ask how often they see their supervisor and what they talk about when they meet. Do these meetings take place during the class/in their homes/ at the supervisor's headquarters/ another place? What was the most useful talk they ever had with their supervisor?

6e) And what kind of help would they like to have with their class activities? Who could give them that help?

7. TEACHING

We want them to look at their teaching activities; and we want to see if they are innovative, so ask them:

7a) What kind of resources/equipment were provided for the Centre/class; what do they feel they need? Did the animator provide any of this for themselves? Does the animator have a TV set; if so, does he/she watch any programmes with the learners?

7b) What are the main difficulties the animator has in teaching the learners? Here we want to get the animators to talk about themselves as teachers, not about the main difficulties the learners have in learning (that comes below in 8b) ; what are their major problems in taking the class, instructing the learners?

7c) If the animator has any problems with the class, does he/she have any helpers or advisers to turn to? Who is their best friend (in terms of being an animator)? Ask o7 3 them to tell you about any particular incident rather than a general statement: we want to see if they talk to anyone in the village about the class work.

7d) Has the animator prepared any materials or used any new methods in the class for themselves? If so, ask them what these are. Did the animator consult the learners when preparing this material or method? did they talk to the supervisor about them? If the answer is 'no', ask them 'why not?' But if the answer is 'yes', ask the animator what the supervisor said in reply.

7e) Looking back on the class, what sort of help would the animator have liked to have received while they were working as animator?

8. LEARNERS LEARNING

Now we want to see what the animators think about the learners in the class as well as about the teaching. So we want you to ask the animators:

8a) Whether the animator thinks the learners in their Centre are motivated to learn literacy or whether they are reluctant learners. If the answer is 'no, they don't want to learn', then ask 'why not? why do the learners come if they don't want to learn? and how can you help them to want to learn?'

8b) Can the animators suggest some of the big difficulties which the learners have in learning. Here we are talking about the learners learning, while in 7b) we were looking at the teachers teaching. Do not prompt too much: if the animator cannot see the difference, then we must accept this.

8c) If the animator can suggest some of these big difficulties, then probe a little deeper: for example, if the animator says that the learners do not come regularly, ask why this is so; or if it is that the learners cannot remember things, ask why this is so.

8d) If the animator is able to suggest some of these big difficulties, ask him/her if they as animators have found any way to help the learners to overcome these difficulties.

9. ANIMATOR'S LEARNING

We have nearly finished. We now want to see how much experience the animator has gained and how they want to use this experience. First the experience:

9a) Does the animator have any suggestions to make as to how their Centre could have been better - anything at all.

9b) Follow-up: Does the animator know if the learners plan to continue to meet as a group after the end of the course; and if so, will the animator meet the learners as a group after the end of the course? Has anyone asked the animator to continue with this same group of learners in a follow up programme?

If asked to do so, would the animator do it: - if paid; if not paid?

9c) Can the animator suggest any follow up which might be useful to his/her group of learners?

9d) We want to try to find out what the animator feels about the agency which employs o7 3 them. So ask whether the animator would like to keep in touch with the providing agency or organisation after the class has ended - and why? or why not?

9e) Now for their career: what does the animator plan to do next? is he/she looking for a job? If so, what sort of job? Try to distinguish between general responses 'yes, I want a job'; vague plans: 'yes, I'm looking for a teaching post'; and definite plans: 'yes, I've applied to ... '

9f) And finally, can the animator suggest any ways in which their village can be improved? What are the developmental needs of the village? And does the animator think that there are any ways in which he/she could now help to get things done in their village?

10. GENERAL CONCLUSION

By now, both you and the animator may be exhausted. But if they want to say anything else about the Centre, just let them talk and note down what seems to you to be the most important things they tell you. If they talk a great deal, then say to them that they have told you many things and that you cannot write it all down, so can they tell you what are the most important things they want to pass on to you. Let them choose.

We wish you well with this task.

Elias
Ranjinadoss
Rogers

Madras, October 1987

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